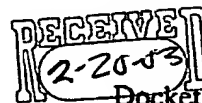


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- (b) determining a downlink symbol count representative of a time of arrival at a satellite of a burst transmitted from an earth terminal;
 - (c) adjusting said downlink symbol counter to correspond to said downlink symbol count;
 - (d) transmitting synchronization bursts from said earth terminal to said satellite in accordance with said downlink symbol counter;
 - (e) determining at said satellite, whether said synchronization bursts received at said satellite are one of early, late, absent, and on time; and
 - (f) reporting in a downlink signal to said earth terminal, a code representing whether said synchronization burst received at said satellite is one of a plurality of early, late, absent and on time.

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27. (Amended) A synchronization method for a satellite communication network, the method comprising:

- (a) establishing a communication satellite in orbit;
- (b) establishing an earth terminal in communication with said satellite;
- (c) generating a master clock on said satellite;
- (d) transmitting downlink symbols synchronously with said master clock from said satellite to said earth terminal;
- (e) maintaining at said earth terminal a downlink symbol counter clocked at a downlink clock rate;
- (f) determining a downlink symbol count representative of a time of arrival of a burst transmitted from an earth terminal to a satellite;
- (g) adjusting said downlink symbol counter to correspond to said downlink symbol count upon receipt of a predetermined reference point in a downlink frame;

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(h) transmitting synchronization bursts from said earth terminal to said satellite in accordance with said downlink symbol counter;

(i) determining at said satellite, whether said synchronization bursts received at said satellite are one of early, late, absent, and on time; and

(j) reporting in a downlink signal to said earth terminal, a code representing whether said synchronization burst received at said satellite is one of a plurality of early, late, absent and on time.

Please add the following new claims 53-55:

53. (New) A method synchronizing an earth terminal in a satellite communication network, the method comprising:

transmitting synchronization bursts from an earth terminal to a satellite in accordance with said downlink symbol counter;

determining at said satellite, whether said synchronization bursts received at said satellite are one of early, late, absent, and on time; and

reporting, to said earth terminal, a code representing whether said synchronization burst received at said satellite is one of a plurality of early, late, absent and on time.

54. (New) A system for synchronizing an earth terminal with a satellite in a communication network, said system comprising:

an earth terminal transmitting a synchronization burst to a satellite; and

a satellite receiving said synchronization burst, determining whether said synchronization burst is one of early, late, absent, and on time, and reporting, to said earth terminal, a code representing whether said synchronization burst received at said satellite is one of a plurality of early, late, absent and on time.

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55. (New) A system for synchronizing an earth terminal with a satellite in a communication network, said system comprising:

- an earth terminal transmitting a synchronization burst to a satellite; and
- a satellite receiving said synchronization burst, determining whether said synchronization burst is one of early and late, and reporting, to said earth terminal, a code representing whether said synchronization burst received at said satellite is one of early and late.
